CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 34, 35, 38, 41 and 42.

Please add the following new claims:

50.   (New) A method of processing segments of a continuous flexible web wherein a stretch of the web is incrementally advanced to successively feed at least one segment of the web to a web processing station having processing components, said method comprising:

holding each successive segment of the stretch of the web while the segment is positioned at the web processing station;

continuing to hold the held segment of web while allowing the held segment to shift relative to and remaining a part of portions of the web on each side thereof, in the X axis direction of feed of the stretch of the web to the processing station, in a Y axis direction transverse of the X direction of feed of said stretch of the web, and about a θ axis of rotation perpendicular to the X and Y axis directions;

accurately adjusting the held segment of the web at said processing station prior to processing thereof and relative to the remaining portions of the web by subjecting the held segment to controlled adjustment motion selected from the group consisting of motion along said X axis, motion along said Y axis, rotation about said θ axis, and simultaneous combinations of such motions as required to obtain accurate alignment of the segment of the web with the processing components at said processing station; and

processing each segment within the station after said accurate adjustment thereof.

-4-

51.   (New) The method of claim 50, wherein the processing components include die cutting elements, and including the step of subjecting the segment of the web at said processing station to die cutting after adjustment of the position of the segment aligned with the die cutting elements

52.   (New) The method of claim 50, wherein is included the steps of providing a shiftable vacuum plate positioned to hold the segment of the web at the web processing station, sequentially applying vacuum to the plate to successively hold said segment of the web, and adjusting the position of the plate while holding said segment of the web to effect said accurate adjustment of the segment at said processing station.

53.   (New) The method of claim 50, said adjusting step including the step of comparing the locations of a fixed reference indicium within said station with an indicium carried by each of said segments.

54.   (New) The method of claim 50, wherein is included the steps of feeding the stretch of the web in said X direction while maintaining tension on said stretch, and relaxing the tension on said stretch while the segment of the web is held at said processing station and during accurate adjustment of the position of the segment with respect to the processing station.